

A
L E T T E R

To the REVEREND

Dr. *WATERLAND*,

Occasion'd by his Late Writings

In D E F E N C E of the

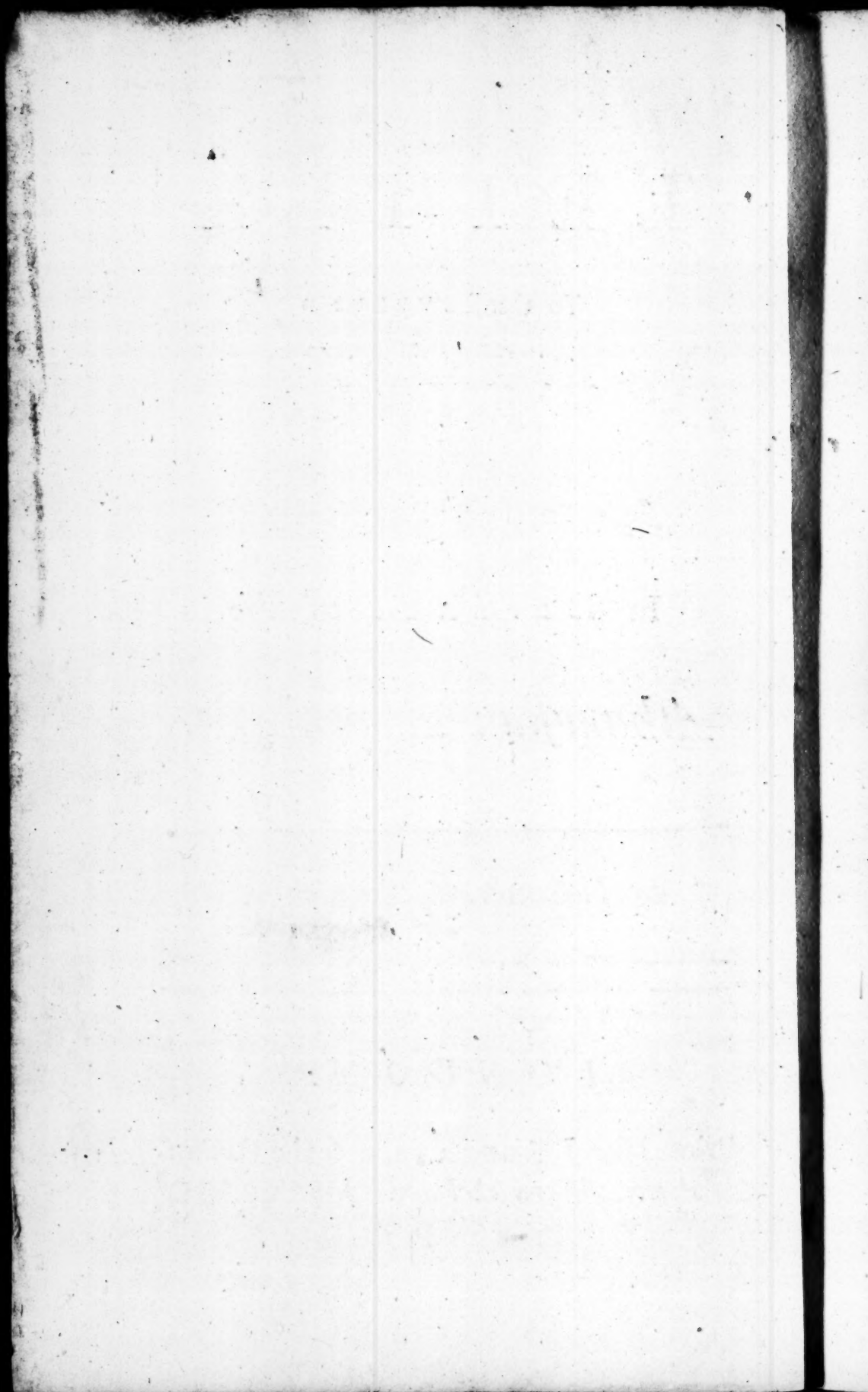
Athanasian Hypothesis.

By *Philanthropus Oxoniensis*.

L O N D O N :

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SIR,



WHILE you are contending with Dr. *Clarke*, Mr. *Whiston*, and other learned Adversaries, about the true and genuine Sense of Scripture, and primitive Antiquity; I cannot but observe with Wonder, that you have, by I know not what sort of Contrivance, really chang'd the State of the Question, which is now no longer about the Sense of Scripture and Antiquity, but about *common Sense* it self, and the very *first Principles of Reason*. I find you are not agreed with your learned Adversaries, in any *one Thing*; but what is with them a self-evident Truth, may be with you a Contradiction; and on the other hand, what they declare as an expresse Contradiction, may be, and often is in your Account, a great and necessary Truth: 'Tis plain therefore, that the Controversy betwixt the *Athanasians* and the rest of the World, can never be brought to an Issue upon the Foot it now stands. There is no disputing to any Purpose, till we are first agreed upon some common Principles, or at least, till

the Point be determined, whether there be any such Thing as common Principles of Sense and Reason among Mankind or not. To what Purpose would a Set of Workmen pretend to agree in the measuring their Work by one and the *same Rule*, while they can't agree about the Nature and Dimensions of the Rule it self? Some contending that it is one Foot long, others two, others three; and some again, that it is of no determinate Length at all; that it is neither finite nor infinite, streight nor crooked; or at least, of so mystical a Nature, that 'tis impossible to determine of what Length it is, or whether it be a Rule or not. Suppose all the Astronomers in the World should be agreed that the *Caroline Tables* are the best, and most exact for determining the Cælestial Motions, while they dispute about the Arithmetical Principles and numeral Construction of the Tables themselves; some contending they ought to be understood and apply'd, according to the Decimal, others according to the Duodecimal, and others again, according to the Sexagesimal Account and Denomination; nay, they dispute whether the Mark of Unity in the Tables, ought not to stand for three Units; and whether the Figure 3 must not sometimes stand for Three, and sometimes for One; and this too, in a Sense which no body is ever like to find out: Must not other People from hence be tempted to conclude, either that *these Tables* can be of *no use* at all, or at least that *those Gentlemen* find it for their Interest, to keep *the Secret* to themselves, that Men might not too generally arrive to the Knowledge of Astronomy. For my own Part, I cannot think that the Scriptures are writ upon more unintelligible Principles, than the *Caroline Tables*,
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since I am sure they were design'd for a more general Use, and in a Matter of infinitely greater Importance. And I make no doubt, but that there are some common Principles, in which Men *may*, and in reality *must* agree, whether they acknowledge it or not: However, when I see a Man denying in Words those common Principles, I cannot presently impeach his Honesty, or conclude that he has any ill Design upon me; because 'tis possible his Understanding may be so far enslav'd to an Hypothesis, and his Mind darkned with general, confus'd, and ambiguous Sounds, that he may not see or observe the Inconsistency or Contradiction of his own Words; nay, perhaps he may be really of the same Mind with his Adversaries, and see and know himself to be so; but yet may think himself bound in Conscience to talk unintelligibly, and to keep above the gross impure Regions of *common Sense*. However, I think it worth while to enquire, whether the Christian Rule of Faith be indeed intelligible; and whether you have not defended the *Athanasian* Hypothesis upon Principles, which might serve equally to defend Transubstantiation, or any other Contradiction in the World?

Whoever reads your Writings with Attention, must needs observe in how confused, general, and doubtful a Sense you all along make use of the Words, *God*, *Hypostasis*, *Unity*, and *Identity*; to each of which Words you have several Meanings, which you take out, or slip in, alter and vary at Pleasure, and just as the Exigence requires, without giving your Reader any fair Notice of it: Nay, if you happen to drop any thing that may seem to glance at what you aim at, and give one any Light into your real Meaning, 'tis so nicely guarded,
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and deliver'd with such extreme Caution and Wariness, as if you was afraid of nothing so much, as of being understood: However, since you have frankly, and thus far fairly declar'd against the *Sabellian* Sense of Unity and Identity, as apply'd to God, Substance, and Hypostasis or Person; it will be worth while to enquire, whether you can have any other than a Tritheistick Meaning; or whether you have indeed hit upon any Medium of Unity, any Principle of Individuation, that can save you from Tritheism. You give us Leave to conceive of your Meaning, with respect to Hypostasis or *Person*, in the common authoriz'd Sense of the Word, as it stands for an *Intelligent Agent*, or Intelligent, Active Substance: For since Intelligence and Agency, or Active Power, are only Properties or Attributes, we must necessarily suppose the Substance it self to be the Agent, the Thing acting, or the Subject which is endued with self conscious Intelligent Agency. But indeed I need not take pains to prove this, because you acknowledge, and often repeat it, that by Hypostasis or Person, you mean not a Mode only, but a real *substantial* Person. Now in the same Sense that one Person is one Intelligent Agent, or Active Substance; 'tis evident that Three Persons must be Three Intelligent, Active Substances. I doubt not but you will be here ready to clap in your other Sense of one Substance, and cry out, that Three Agents are but One *Undivided Substance*: I shall suppose for the present, this Composition of Substances to be *another Sense* of one Substance, that I may allow you, according to your Talent, to abound in *different Senses*; yet still I say, that under the same Sense in which One Person is One Intelligent, Active Substance,

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in that Sense *precisely*, Three Persons must be Three Intelligent Active Substances; and the Denial of this must pass for an express Contradiction, even in the Schools, upon the last Pinch; because it would be affirming and denying the same thing at the same time, and in the very same Sense. And indeed when you are forced to own, that the Three Persons are but One Person, and *that* One Person again Three Persons, in different Senses and Respects; why can you not as well say, that in the same different Senses and Respects there are *Three Substances*, and yet but *One Substance*. The same Nature of the thing, the very same Reason and Necessity must lead you to say the one, as well as the other, if you dar'd speak out; but since you are obstinate, and will not do it, I challenge you to give any better Reason for it than this, That it would not so well suit with your *Hypothesis*, which being inconsistent with itself, must *really* overthrow what it only *seems* to establish. I believe every one must allow, that One Independent, Omniscient, All-powerful Agent is the true and proper Definition of *One God*; consequently Three such Agents, which your Hypothesis lays you under a Necessity of admitting, must be *Three Gods*; you will say doubtless, that they ought to be considered as united in one Undivided Substance, and so the *Three Persons* are but *One God*: But then you say likewise, that, as thus consider'd, they are but *One Person*, and therefore still they must be Three Gods, in the same Sense that they are *Three Persons*.

But to let the Reader see a little farther the Excellency of your Hypothesis; I shall now shew, that it lays you under a Necessity all along, of using the word *God* in no less than four different Senses;

Senses ; in every one of which there is something included, essential to the Nature and Definition of the thing, that is left out in all the rest ; and consequently they cannot be God in the *same Sense*, or one and the *same God*. When you apply the word *God* to the Person of the *Father*, and say God the *Father*, or God who is the *Father*, 'tis evident you must identify God with the Person of the *Father* ; and consequently in the Nature and Definition of God, as thus understood, you must include the Idea of Unorigination, or absolute, intrinsick, and personal Self-necessity, or Self-existence ; which being peculiar and essential to God the *Father*, cannot be taken into the Nature and Definition of God, when the same Name is apply'd to any other Person. Again, when you say *God* the *Son*, you must here, in the Nature and Definition of *God*, include the Ideas of *Filiation*, and communicated Subsistence from the *Father only* ; which being essential to *God* the *Son*, cannot make a Part of the complex Idea express'd by the word *God*, when it is made use of, as the Name or Denomination of any other. In like manner the Property of Procession, or communicated Subsistence, both from the *Father* and the *Son*, must alter the Signification of the same Word, when apply'd to the Spirit as *God*. And lastly, when you apply the same word, *God*, to all Three *Persons* conjunctly, or consider'd as united in your one *undivided Substance*, you join all the inconsistent Ideas together in *One God*, who is then likewise said to be *One Person* ; as if all these contrary and incompatible Properties could possibly exist in one and the same simple, individual Subject or Substance. You will say perhaps, that tho' the word *God*, has these different personal Senses,

Senses, from whence the real Distinction of *Persons* must arise; yet these Persons, whether consider'd distinctly or conjunctly, are one and the *same God*: Which is as much as saying, that tho' you use the word God, in four different *Senses*, yet these different Senses are but one and the *same Sense*; but still God in another, and another Sense, will be another, and another God, do what you can. And indeed the Absurdity here is so gross and apparent, that 'tis impossible for any Colourings of Sophistry to hide it: For who does not, or may not see, that what in the common Language and Cant of the Schools is call'd the *same thing* in different Senses, must in Truth and Reality be quite *different things*? For as these different Senses must necessarily alter the Nature and Definition of the thing, *the same thing* in Sound will be in Truth really and *essentially* different things; which *different things* trump'd upon the Understanding, under the *same Sound*, may be as contrary and incompatible, as Light and Darkness, Truth and Falshood. And that they are so in your Hypothesis, is evident from hence; that you have not been able to establish the Notion of *One God*, in any Sense at all, without supposing and allowing the *Three Persons* to be but one and the *same Person*, in the *same Sense* that God is *One*. And here I might fairly leave it to your Choice, whether you will take *Sabellianism* or *Tritheism*, since you are evidently suspended in the Air, and without any Foundation, betwixt 'em both. However, for Speculation Sake, and because I am also willing to do you all possible Justice, I shall consider your Hypothesis a little farther with respect to your *One Undivided Substance*, as a Principle of Identity and Individua-

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tion; but before I do this, I must inform the Reader, what I take to be your real Notion, that you may explain your self more distinctly to the World, if I am mistaken about it; or mend your Hypothesis, if you should find it defective. Since then the *Sabellian* Notion, of one numerically simple and individual Substance, must necessarily overthrow the Foundation of Three real Persons, and by Consequence be absolutely inconsistent with a real Trinity; there was plainly a Necessity of supposing Three such Simple, Personal, Individual Substances or Essences; which yet you will not call Substances or Essences in the Plural, because being all equally and infinitely extended, they must, as you suppose, by their Ubiquitary Presences, pervade each other; and by a Sort of mutual Penetration of Essences become one numerical Compound, or individual Substance.

And thus the Three Simple, Personal Essences, of which the one Compound Substance consists, by their intimate Union and Inseparability with respect to Space or Expansion, are, as I conceive, in your Account individuated; and after this manner you have a Trinity in Unity. It will be difficult, and perhaps impossible, to guess at your Meaning by *intimate Union, Inhabitation, mutual Penetration, Undividedness*, and the like, if you do not borrow all your Ideas of this Kind from the Nature and Properties of Space, or Expansion.

Presuming therefore, that you have not Faculties different from other Men, and that you would be thought to use Words with some Meaning or other, I shall here take leave to make two or three Remarks upon this way of talking.

1. 'Tis manifest that you all along confound *Intimate Union, Undividedness, or Inseparability*, with *Numerical Unity, Individuality, or Identity*; tho' *these* are as distinct and different, with respect to the things themselves signified by 'em, as any Ideas you can possibly have in your mind. 'Tis evident, that where different things are considered as united, be the Union never so close, intimate, or inseparable, the things themselves must still be suppos'd to retain their proper Individualities, or distinct numerical Diversity, with respect to their real, actual Existence, as much as if they were not so united. And whenever we lose, or let slip the Idea of actually distinct Individuality, or numerical Diversity, we can no longer consider it under the Notion of a *Union*, or *different things united*, but must necessarily conceive of it, as an *absolute Identity* of the *same thing with it self*. And tho' *different things*, thus united, may make *one Compound* under a *different Denomination*, and express'd by a *collective Name*; yet they can never make *one Compound* of the *same Denomination*, without confounding the most different Ideas, and destroying the Nature and Reason of things. Let us put the Case; for Instance, that of the Soul and Body, as Two Substances, distinguish'd by some essential and incommunicable Attributes, as suppose intelligent Agency and Solidity; and now let these Two Substances be suppos'd to be united as closely, intimately, and inseparably as you please; let them mutually inhabit, and pervade, and penetrate each other, or what you will; yet still while they retain their really distinct, essential, and incommunicable Properties, you must necessarily

conceive of them as two Substances, as much as if they were locally separated, and at an infinite Distance. Now tho' the Consequence, or Result of such an Union, might be one Compound under a general Denomination, or *one Man*; where the Term, *Man*, is taken collectively for the two Substances of Soul and Body united; yet 'tis impossible that their mutual Union, of what Kind soever, should make *one Substance*, without destroying the first Supposition of *two Substances*; and also denying, what is at the same time granted, that they have essentially distinct, and incommunicable Properties. If any one after all this would still resolutely maintain, that the Soul and Body, by their Union, cease to be *two Substances*, and are really identify'd into one and the *same Substance*, what would be thought of him, but that he was under some unhappy Necessity of confounding and destroying the Nature and Reason of Things, by using indifferently, and without Distinction, the words, White and Black, Light and Darknes?

Now to apply this general Principle to your Hypothesis: You have been oblig'd to allow Three real Hypostases, or Three really distinct, and actually existing, personal Essences: And this you were under a Necessity of doing, to avoid *Sabellianism*, and to support the really distinct and incommunicable Properties, which are essentially peculiar to each of the Three Persons. But here, startled at what you had granted, and being well aware, that this would be undisguis'd Tritheism, you endeavour to make all up again, by running into the contrary Extreme, and contradicting all that you had said. For now rather than lose the Unity, your Three Hypostases, or *Personal Essences*, shall be
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but *One Hypostasis* or *Personal Essence* : But how comes this about ; how is it possible, that three Substances or Essences, should be but one such ? Why, by a certain unconceivable Inhabitation, and mutual Pervasion , or Penetration of Essences, which *really* identifies them into *One* and the *same Substance*. But here lies the Mischief ; if they are not only *closely* and *intimately united*, but *really identified*, you have *really* lost the *Trinity*, and have created your Three Hypostases, to shew that you could annihilate them again ; if they are *only united*, and *not really identified*, you have *really* lost the *Unity*, or *Sameness* of Substance : But if they are *really identified*, and not *really identified*, which is what you indeed say ; I think it must be evident to common Sense, that your Hypothesis is *really* a *Contradiction*. Here, as I expect, you will fly to your different *Respects* and *Senses*, the last Refuge of scholastick Fencing, which never fails of bearing off a Contradiction upon the closest Thrust : And by the Force of this Distinction, I must own, that Light may be Darknes, and Darknes Light ; not indeed in the *same Sense*, as every one must allow ; but he who cannot admit it in *different Senses*, will never be able to fathom the Depths of many learned elaborate *Defences*. However, this Distinction here, after what has been said, cannot help you ; nor can you get off with it, without a Confession more shameful, than any Error of the meer Understanding ; namely, that by *Unity* you mean *Multiplicity*, by *Identity*, *Diversity*, and by *One* and the *same Thing*, three or four quite *different Things*. But Truth needs none of these *Doublings* ; nor is it really serv'd, by all the Subtilty and Windings

ings of the Serpent. You would never want a different *Sound*, where the *Sense* is different, if you had not one *Sense* to conceal, while you are uncovering *another*; and *this* again must be wrapt up, while *that* is suffer'd to take a little Air: Whereas should both in one View be expos'd to the open Light, the *Mystery* would become a *Jest*; and the Reader must exchange his *Wonder*, for a Passion of a *merrier Strain*. But,

2. I must observe to you farther, that if your Principle of Identity, or Sameness of Substance, be admitted; it cannot in the least serve the Cause you have been contending for. It will stand as well in a different, or contrary *Hypothesis*, as in *yours*; and an *Heretick* will find his Accounts in it, as much as a *good Christian*: Nay, it will help the *Eusebians* and *Arians* out of all their Hardships, and enable them to be *Orthodox*, without changing their *Principles*. There is no Necessity of supposing the *LOGOS* to be a finite Substance, whatever the Manner of *Derivation* from the Father be, whether by an *Eternal Generation* before all Times and Ages, or by a *Temporary Generation*; since one may as easily and consistently suppose the *Infiniteness* as the *Finiteness*, even of a *created Substance*: For since the first self-existent independent Cause, is allowed by all to be Omnipresent, and All-powerful, and can whenever he pleases, with the same Ease and Freedom, act every where alike; 'tis plain that nothing can restrain or limit his *Power*, in the Production of a finite Being, but his *Will*. Now supposing the *LOGOS* to be a distinct Hypostasis from the Father, and supposing him likewise infinite, or every where existing, whether created or un-

uncreated ; the same universal intimate Union, and mutual Penetration of Hypostases, or simple individual Personal Essences, must necessarily follow ; which is the Ground and Foundation of your *Identity*, or *Sameness* of Substance.

Here will be the same *Inhabitation*, the same mutual *Pervasion*, the same *Undividedness*, with respect to Space or Expansion ; and consequently, the same Identity of Substance : So that your Method will serve to *Identify*, not only God with God, one divine Hypostasis with another, as they are considered in your Hypothesis ; but even an uncreated with a created Substance, or God with a Creature. And now, whether all you call Hereticks, will thank you for what you have done, I cannot say ; but this I am sure of, that bating the uncharitable *Manner of the Thing*, you have done them no harm. But,

3. The great and startling Difficulty, which attends your Principle of Identification, is this, That it must necessarily Identify all Substances, whether Finite or Infinite, with the one infinite, self-existent Substance. Inhabitation, mutual Pervasion, Penetration and Co-existence, Inseparability and Undividedness of Substance or Essence, is with you the general Principle of Identification, or that which makes one Substance numerically the same. Now, whatever is sufficient to identify Substance every where, must do the like any where ; and because 'tis impossible for any Finite Substance any where to exist, without coexisting, or undividedly existing with the one infinite Substance, by an intimate Union, mutual Pervasion, and Undividedness of Essence ; this must upon your Principle, identify all finite Substances with
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the one Substance of God : And being thus identified with one and the same Divine Substance, they cannot be different *Substances* from each other : 'Tis true, there will still remain the different, incommunicable and distinct individuating Properties, by which we commonly distinguish different Things from one another ; but the most different and incompatible Properties are very consistent, *you know*, with *one* and the *same Substance*. And seeing they are thus consistent, when consider'd as every where, they must be also consistent any where considered, or where-ever you consider them in particular. So that I cannot see but your Principle of *Identity*, if you would be thought to mean any thing, must coincide with that of *Spinoza* ; that there is a Consubstantiality, or Identity of *Essence*, betwixt God and the *Universe* ; or that God is *all Substance*, and there is no other Substance, but the one necessary, self-existent or *Divine Substance*. This looks like a very unlucky Appendage to your *Hypothesis*, and a dead Weight upon *it*, which I should be glad to know, how you will get rid of. Perhaps the best way may be, to own that you have talk'd without Ideas, and desire that what you have said, may pass for *nothing* ; and this I believe will be really the Case, as to the far greater part of the Learned World, whether you *desire it* or no.

Whether this Way of talking about Substances, or *Substrata*, as the *Subjects* and *Supports* of distinct individuating *Properties*, be agreeable to the real Existence and Nature of Things, or not, is not my Business here to enquire ; 'tis sufficient to shew, that if it be granted, it will stand good in *one Hypothesis* as well as *another* ; and must be attended with Consequences, which you cannot bear.

bear. I am very well persuaded, however, that the true System of Nature, when rightly understood, is still more inconsistent with your *Hypothesis*; but we need go no farther, since your *own Account* of Things, if you will stand to it, is sufficient to overthrow all that you have said. If you lose your *One Substance*, you are gone, as having no other Principle of Identity for *One God*; and while you will retain it, I think you cannot possibly, in the *same Sense*, suppose *more Substances* than *One*: And therefore, an *Athanasian*, an *Eusebian*, an *Arian*, a *Socinian*, and even an *Atheist*, will equally find their different and contrary Accounts, in *one* and the *same Thing*. And is not *Christianity*, think you, extremely clear'd and mended, by this sort of *Philosophy*, at first brought in by the *Fathers*, from the *Pagan Schools*, and now espoused a-new, and farther improved in Defense of the Holy Scriptures, by a Learned *modern Divine*? Can you indeed sit down, and with Satisfaction bless your self upon the Review, while you have been filling the *Heads* of Christian People with *empty Sounds*, and their Hearts with *Antichristian Rage*, against all those, who will not explain *St. Paul* and the *Scriptures*, by *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and the *Heathen Metaphysicks*? Really, Sir, if Christianity cannot be understood or defended, but upon such Principles as *these*, I fear you will never be able to *understand* or *defend* it at all. But could you clear your Hypothesis, relating to the Trinity and Unity, from Absurdity and Contradiction, as I believe you cannot; yet there is another Difficulty still behind, more stiff and inflexible than the former; and that is, how to apply your Principles

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with any Truth or Consistency to the Christian Doctrine of the *Incarnation*, and the acknowledged *One Person* of our Saviour Jesus Christ, after *the Word was made Flesh*. Could you therefore avoid Tritheism, without falling upon Sabellianism, which is what you have not been able to do; yet still, I can't but think, that it will be altogether impossible, in *your Way*, to avoid Nestorianism, without falling upon *something worse*. I hope it will not be look'd upon as a Mark of Irreligion or Profaneness, to suppose that Christianity is an *intelligible Thing*; or to enquire about the meaning of certain *Words*, which are now made use of, in Matters of the greatest Importance; tho' they are not to be found, thus applied, in the Scripture it self. I have the greatest Deference for the Doctrines of the *Church*; but then I must suppose that the *Church* designs to be understood; for otherwise her *Articles of Faith* will not be *really Doctrines*, but *Words only*. And as for our *own Church of England*, I can be very confident, that she never once intended to bind any of her Members to Impossibilities, or expected to have her *Articles* understood, in any other than a *Scripture Sense*; and consequently, not to pin down Men to the *Athanasian Sense*, farther than it may be made intelligible, and consistent with the *true Sense* of Scripture. Upon this fair and reasonable Supposition therefore, which cannot be denied me, I must apply my self to you, *Sir*, for a little farther Satisfaction, in what Sense we are to understand the *Athanasian Doctrine*, concerning the *Incarnation* and *one Person* of Jesus Christ. And here I believe all the World must own, that I
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could not have made a more proper personal Application, since you are universally acknowledged as one of the Ablest and most Learned of our modern *Athanasians*; and your Obligation to give us all reasonable Satisfaction, is the more *peculiar*, as you have in a very particular and distinguishing Manner, espoused and interested your self in the *Athanasian Cause*.

The common *Doctrine*, or at least *verbal Declaration* of the *Athanasians* is this, That Christ, or the *LOGOS*, by his Incarnation, assumed the whole human Nature, *i. e.* a true Body, and a Rational Soul, into a Personal Union with his Eternal and Divine Person; and so ever remains Two distinct *Natures* in *One Person*. Now here the great and seemingly unsurmountable Difficulty lies in this; How it is possible, in any intelligible Sense, that the Personal *LOGOS*, an infinite, eternal, and necessarily existing Agent, should be the self-same Person with a finite created human Soul; *i. e.* How Two such infinitely distant and different Beings, Agents, and Substances, can be one Person, the self-same I, the same He, or the same common individual Subject of the most essentially and infinitely different Properties and Actions. Here then it is certain, that the Words, *One Person, One Agent, One numerical Self*, &c. cannot possibly be taken in any hitherto known or explain'd Sense; since to say that a finite, created, human Soul, is the same intelligent Agent, the self-same individual Person, the same Substance, the same personal I, or He, with *God* Infinite, Eternal, Uncreated, and necessarily Existent; I say, to affirm this in any hitherto known or explain'd Sense,

must be not only the grossest Absurdity and Contradiction, but downright Blasphemy also. When therefore you, with other *Athanasians*, in a Sense peculiar to your selves, assert this; it cannot appear, till you have explain'd your Meaning, whether you contradict any body or no. Perhaps, if you were able and willing to explain your selves, we might be found all of one Mind, and the Difference might lye in Words only. Nothing can be more unreasonable therefore, in you and your Party, than thus openly to condemn other People, as dangerous Hereticks, while you will not tell them in what Sense, they can, or ought to be Orthodox. 'Tis certain, that in your *Hypothesis*, when you say, *Christ is God*, you must mean *One Person*; and when you say, *Christ is Man*, you must mean *another Person*, according to the known establish'd meaning of the Word *Person*, in the *common Sense* of Mankind: Now if in *common Sense* you have Two *Personal* Saviours, *Two Christs*, and Two *Sons* of God; One Infinite, Eternal, and Uncreated; and the other, Finite and Created in Time: I say, if this be so in *common Sense*; and consequently if the *Scripture* cannot be understood in, but is a Contradiction to *common Sense*; you ought in all Reason and Conscience, to tell us in *what Sense* it can and must be understood; or fairly own, that it is absolutely unintelligible, and cannot be understood in *any Sense at all*. However, I am very much inclined to think, that it is not the *Scripture Account* of Things, but *your Account*; not the *Christian Revelation*, but *your Hypothesis*, that is inconsistent with, and contradictory to *common Sense*. For tho' the *Heads* and *Leaders* of Parties

ties may, yet I cannot think that the *Holy Ghost*, in the Christian Revelation, would use Words under a different Sense from what they had been ever used among Mankind before, without giving us the least Notice of it. I shall content my self therefore to show, that your Hypothesis is a Contradiction to common Sense, and must make the whole Christian Revelation so too; and then leave you either to affix some other Sense to Scripture, or quit your Principles, as you shall find Occasion. It is granted by all *Athanasians*, that Christ had a compleat and perfect *Human Nature*; and that after the Incarnation, he wanted nothing that is essential to *Man*. But Human Intelligent Agency is essential to Man, as such; and 'tis plainly impossible to have any Notion or Idea of Humanity, or Human Nature, without including the Ideas of Human Intelligency, and Human Agency; and Human Intelligent Agency is the same thing, in the common Sense of Mankind, with Human Personality: From hence then, I think, it is plain, that 'tis impossible to have any Idea at all of Human Nature, without including Human Intelligent Agency, or Human Personality; and consequently it will be alike impossible to conceive of a Man actually Existing, Understanding, and Acting, without conceiving him to be a Human Person. To abstract Human Nature then from Human Personality, and to talk of a true and proper Man, really existing, and acting *as Man*, who is not a Human Person, is to renounce and deny all the Principles of Reason and common Sense, and to make Words signify nothing at all. And all this to avoid saying, that the Name *Christ*, is taken collectively, as being put
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for *Two Persons*, a Divine Person, and a Human Person; tho' 'tis impossible, in the *Athanasian Hypothesis*, that the thing should be otherwise. And I here challenge you, upon your own Principles, to make it appear as possible, how Christ should not be a *Human Person*, and yet be a true and real *Man*; or to divest him of a *Human Personality*, without robbing him of his *Human Nature* too. You allow him to be a Divine Person; and I think I have proved, that, in your Hypothesis, he must be a Human Person too; and consequently, that the *Son of God*, and the *Son of Man*, must, upon your Principles, be Two different Persons, under the common Name of *Jesus Christ*, and acting in one common Capacity of Mediation: And to suppose otherwise, must oblige you to make one imaginary compound Person of Two simple and real Persons, of Two infinitely different *Intelligent Agents*; of which compound Person, every thing that can be affirmed or denied, will at the same time be equally *true* and *false*. In your Hypothesis, it is as false that *Christ* suffered and died for our Sins, as it is *true* that *Christ* is *God*: That Christ is Finite and Infinite, Created and Uncreated, and that he is God and Man, are both true, and both false. That *his Father is greater than he*, and that he *did not*, while he was upon Earth, *know the Day of Judgment*, are both true, and yet both as *false* as they are *true*. This, Sir, is your Divinity: But alas for the *Dulness* of *Hereticks*! All this comes about for want of distinguishing between the *different Senses*, in which the *same thing* may be true and false at the same time. And alas again for the *Wisdom* of *Catholicks*! These *different*

rent Senses will, in spite of your Heart, change the Subject of the Proposition, and make your *same thing*, quite *different things*; and your One Person, Two *different Persons*, infinitely more different than *Michael* the Archangel, and *St. Paul*. But I shall now suppose that you had made all this clear and intelligible, how Two Intelligent Natures may possibly be united in One Person, without either confounding the Natures, or dividing the Person; yet even upon this Supposition, I say, you cannot, upon your own Principles, have any Notion or Idea of the *Humiliation of Christ*, or of any possible Satisfaction or Atonement he could make for Sin, but what a *Socinian* may allow. For call it a Personal Union, or what you will, you cannot but grant, that whatever is created must be essentially different from *God*; and the Human Nature, or the Man *Christ* being a Creature, no Talk of Union, or Personal Identity can help you, or in the least alter the Case, while the Distance and Difference are confessedly as equally and infinitely great, as if there was no such Union at all. For nothing can be conceived under a greater and more essential Difference, than the Son of God, and the Son of Man, as they must stand in your Scheme. Now to comply with the Necessity of your Hypothesis, I shall endeavour, for a little while, to talk without Ideas, and suppose the Infinite, Eternal, Uncreated *LOGOS*, to be the same *Person* with a Created *Human Soul* and *Body*; or, to speak still more unintelligibly, with the *Human Nature*, i.e. with Man in *general*, but no Man in *particular*. Well, but let this be suppos'd to contain some Truth in it, in some Sense or other; and what then

then will be the Consequence? Why, that the Sufferings of the Human Soul, or Human Nature, will acquire an infinite Worth and Value, from the personal Union of the *LOGOS*. For by reason of the personal Union, what is done or suffered in one *Nature only*, may be attributed to the *whole Person*. By *Person* here, must be meant *both Natures*, which by their Union constitute the Person; and therefore to say, that what is done or suffered in *one Nature only*, is attributed to the *whole Person*, is the same thing with saying, that what is done or suffered in one *Nature only*, is by a false Attribution supposed to be done or suffered in *both Natures*. For what is the *whole Person*, but *both Natures* united? And indeed, the Real, Vital Union of both Natures, and the mutual Communication of Joys and Sufferings, which is the only Principle that can raise the Dignity and Value of the Human Sacrifice, is here plainly supposed and asserted, at the same time that it must necessarily be deny'd, as inconsistent with the Hypothesis. But since the *LOGOS* is here supposed to be incapable of suffering by any Loss or Pain sustained by the Human Nature, what is suffered in the Human Nature only, cannot be attributed to both *Natures*, or to the *Person*, without a manifest Absurdity, and Self-contradiction. The *whole Person* cannot be said to lose or suffer, unless the Loss and Suffering be in both *Natures*; for the human Nature only, is not the *Person*. While there is a real, vital Union, for Instance, between the Soul and Body, and a consequent mutual Communication, so that they must necessarily enjoy, or suffer together; the Sufferings of either, will be the Sufferings of

of the whole Man : In which Case, the Sufferings, if they are freely undertaken, will be estimated and valued, in Proportion to the Innocence and Dignity of the Soul, the noblest Part of the Man : But if we suppose the Soul and Body to be so united, or rather disunited, as to destroy this vital Union and mutual Communication of Joys and Sufferings ; the bare *Sufferings* of the Body, should we suppose it capable of suffering without a real vital Communication with the Soul, could not at all be raised by the Dignity of the Soul ; 'tis plainly the Dignity of the Sufferer that must raise the Value of the Sufferings ; and therefore where the Sufferer is only a *Human Soul*, or *Human Nature*, the bare Name or Sound of Union with the *LOGOS*, can add no real Weight or Worth to the Sufferings.

This Hypothesis then, that is so much cried up, and, as it were, adored, on account of an infinite Satisfaction and Atonement, in Truth and Reality affords no Satisfaction at all, beyond the Capacity and Value of *Human Nature*, or a Human Soul and Body. It will be still urged, perhaps, that where two Natures make one Compound, the Properties and Affections of each may certainly be affirmed of the whole ; and that this is justified by the general Consent of Mankind, and the common Use of Language, while the mere Properties and Affections of the Body, as Weight, Stature, Complexion, &c. are affirmed of the Man ; but this is only by a usual Figure of Speech, where a Part is put for the whole, or the contrary ; and in all such Instances, the *Man* can only signify the Man's *Body* ; for should we take Man here properly for Soul and

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Body

Body too, of which the Man really consists, such Predications could not possibly be true.

'Tis wonderful, how far this gross and palpable Fallacy has prevail'd, and how apt Men are to catch at a figurative, improper Expression, in a loose and popular way of speaking, as if it was strictly true in Argument, and agreeable to the Nature of things. Nothing is more frequent in a common way of speaking, than this Sort of Metonymy, where the Name of the Whole is put for a Part only, or the Name of a Part for the Whole. But in Argument and Strictness of Speech, we ought to take care not to lose the proper Subject of the Predication, by affirming that of the Whole, which is true only of a Part. 'Tis evident, that where any *Whole* under a common Name, is made up of two different and distinct *Subjects*, with their peculiar and different Properties; the Properties of each cannot be affirm'd of the *Whole*, *i. e.* of both Subjects. In all such Predications, if *true*, there must necessarily be considered a real Communication, or Community of the same Kind of Properties in both Subjects; which being here contrary to the Supposition, such an Affirmation is plainly a Self-contradiction. In your Hypothesis, there must be an infinite and essential Difference betwixt the *LOGOS*, and the Human Soul of our Saviour; so that there cannot possibly be suppos'd any real Communication, or Community of Properties; they will have nothing in common, but every thing, both Substance and Properties, essentially and infinitely different. And therefore, if you suppose the Name

Jesus Christ, affix'd to the whole Person or Compound, consisting of the *LOGOS* in Union with a Human Soul and Body, there is not one Proposition in Scripture concerning *Christ*, but what must be necessarily false. In this Hypothesis, it will not be true, that *Christ* suffered and died for our Sins; because this is true *only* of the Human Nature: but the Human Nature *only* is not *Christ*. Again; it will not be true, that *Christ* is God, that he is the Only-begotten of the Father, that he was sent from the Father, and that he took Flesh, to be made an Offering for Sin: This, I say, in your Hypothesis, cannot be one Word of it true; because all this is true only of the *LOGOS*, or Divine Nature; but the *LOGOS*, or Divine Nature *only*, is not *Christ*. 'Tis evident, that this Way of talking, supposes *Christ* or the *Person* to be some *Tertium Quid*, some common Subject, in which both Natures subsist as Properties or Attributes. But what is that *Tertium Quid*, or common Subject? but the Sum or aggregate of both Natures united. And therefore to affirm the Properties of *each* Nature of the *Person*, is the same Thing with affirming the Properties of *each* Nature of *both* Natures; or saying that every Thing that is true of *One*, is true of *Both*; which yet is contrary to the Hypothesis. And from hence again, appears the Necessity you are under of silently changing the Subject of the Proposition, as often as you join the Properties of each Nature distinctly, under One Personal Name. Thus when you say, *Christ* is God, and *Christ* is Man; because you retain the same Personal Sound

in both Propositions, the Reader has his Eyes dazzled, and thinks you mean still the *same Person*, by the same Personal Name, *Christ*: Whereas in your Hypothesis, you must unavoidably mean Two essentially Distinct, and infinitely different *Persons*. But here I must desire you to observe, that whenever I say, *this* or *that* must necessarily be so, or that such or such a Thing is false, impossible, or contradictory; I mean only with Respect to *common Sense*. And therefore all that I pretend to prove is, That *your Sense*, whatever it be, cannot possibly be *common Sense*. But I would not be thought hereby to suppose, or intimate, that you have *no Sense* at all; or that what you say, is not in your own Sense true. Doubtless you have some Meaning or other; some secret *reserv'd Sense*, which, when you shall please to speak out, perhaps it may appear, that you and I are of one and the *same Mind*; and that we are contending all this while, about *Words only*. However, if this be so, the Fault is none of mine. I speak *freely*, and endeavour to speak *plainly*; and 'till you will do the like, if there should happen to be any Misunderstanding betwixt us, the Blame must lie at your Door. Upon the whole, I cannot but think, that without some other sort of Defense, and some clearer Account of Things, than have hitherto appeared on the *Athanasian Side*; the World must soon begin to suspect that you are but in *Jest*, and that you write only to *betray* the Cause you would seem to espouse: This doubtless you will receive

as a very hard Saying, and be ready
to say, *Who can bear it?* And I hope, Sir,
you will not bear it, without answering the
true Design of it; by telling us plainly, whe-
ther Christianity be an *Intelligible Thing*, and
whether it is *indeed* consistent with *Common*
Sense, or not.

I am,

S I R,

Your Humble Servant, &c.

F I N I S.

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